# STUDIES IN CHRISTIAN OPTIMISM

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# STUDIES

IN

# CHRISTIAN OPTIMISM

*By*

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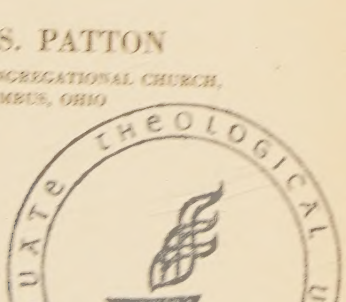


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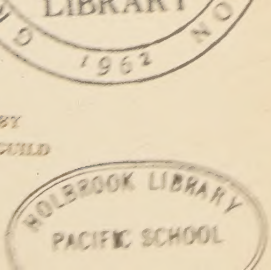

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# WHY WORRY?

"Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air; for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your Heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin; and yet I say unto you that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or what shall we drink? or wherewithal shall we be clothed? For your heavenly father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." — Matth. vi, 25-33.

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## WHY WORRY?

I know well enough what can be said against taking these famous words of Jesus at their face value. "Jesus", it can be said, "was an idealist, a dreamer; he wandered about the country in a sort of holiday spirit, eating at other people's tables, and sleeping in other people's beds, and letting other people do his worrying for him." Quote to any house-keeper, Jesus' words to his hostess, "Martha, Martha, thou art troubled about many things," and she will say to you, "I guess if Jesus had been in Martha's place, and had had a man come into dinner at the last minute when there was nothing for him to eat, he would have worried too."

And it may be admitted that the case of Jesus was about as unlike the case of the average modern man as it could be. He had no wife nor children. He was not a business man, nor a professional man. He never worked for anybody. He never hired anybody to work for him. He had no great financial responsibilities, no big pay-roll, no competitors, no creditors who pushed him, no customers who wouldn't pay their

bills. He took no part in politics. If there were any abuses in the government or the business of his people,—and I guess there were plenty,—he did not bother himself about them. He lived a life apart. But you and I can not live this way.

Indeed, more than this can be said. It can be said that Jesus' illustration is not a good one. The birds do labor,—up in the morning, earlier a good deal than you and I. Few big business men are as busy as the sparrows that lodge in the eaves of their offices. Competition is as strong among the bees and the beavers, as it is among the manufacturers. Nature is not the holiday affair for which Jesus took it. The modern naturalist would very likely say that the birds do worry. And what is worse, God does not always take care of them. You may find their dead bodies, sometimes by the thousands, in the path of the storm. And what is worse again, Jesus speaks as if he thought God would take care of people,—would "add things" to them,—keep them out of the poor-house, and see that they have something to wear,—and we know He will not.

And there is even another thing that can be said. There are some indications in the words of Jesus that he shared the expecta-

tion of his times, that the end of the world was near. If he did, this advice of his for people not to worry, about their money or their clothes, was easy enough. What were these things, in the face of the great change that was impending? Under such an expectation, people have always been careless of the future. If the curtain may fall at any moment, upon the little drama of human life, and cut it short even in the middle of an act, why should anyone be so particular about it?

I am not surprised, therefore, to find a modern commentator saying,—and I can not read his words without some sympathy, —"Into our modern world with its hurry and its striving, this song about care comes ringing like a strain from the lost paradise. Probably none of us can heartily accept the sentiment without secret objections, and many a man, who lives a life of need and struggle, will bitterly reject it as not meant for him. To the Galilean wanderer, whose slight needs were supplied by the hands of friends, and who in a rich and fertile country ever found God's table spread for him, life was easier than to the modern townsman who must put forth all his strength to gain a scanty reward. Jesus and his followers had broken the bridges behind

them in the convinced consciousness of a near new world, where everything would be different and everything would be perfect; he was dominated by no care for wife and child, and for him there was no dark future to look forward to with anxiety. How different is the position of the man of today. He can not take the birds for his model,—that is self-evident." I can not read such words, without some sympathy. There is something in them. Unless the words of Jesus are to be understood as mere poetry, not to be taken seriously, I can not bring myself to feel precisely as he did about worry. Can you?

And yet, worry is a thing that nobody approves of. There are different kinds of worry, to be sure;—some better, some worse, —but all bad. Some people worry about great things; there was Charles Darwin, for instance; the only thing that worried him was that some time the sun would cool off and we should all freeze, and that the world would not have a chance to start over again until the planetary system had again been converted into red-hot gas! There is nothing small, at least, about such a worry as that! Some men look deeper than the rest of us into the life of their generation; they see breakers ahead that the rest of us do not

see, and worry about the ship-wreck to which the rest of us plunge thoughtlessly on. But most people worry about little things, —about clothes, about money, about invitations, and such stuff.

All these worries are bad. The big worry of the big man is bad, because it impairs his usefulness. The little worries of little people are bad, because they spoil their tempers and interfere with their enjoyment of life. "You have too much respect upon the world" said Gratiano to Antonio; "They lose it that do buy it with much care." "Care's an enemy to life," as Sir Toby said. The doctors of our day are insisting that worry makes well people sick and keeps sick people from getting well. This is only what old John Wolcot said:

> "Care to our coffin adds a nail, no doubt,
> And every grin so merry draws one out."

"Care will kill a cat," said Ben Johnson; and the modern man echoes his sentiment in more prosaic words when he says, "Worry kills more men than work." All our worries are bad. We should do more work, get more pleasure and give more, and be wiser and happier and better without them.

But some people say we can not get rid of worry. It is a matter of temperament, they say. If you are born so that you don't

have to worry, you may thank God for it; but if you were born to worry, all you can do is to worry along.

I don't believe it. Worry is a mental habit. The people who worry the most, are generally the people who have the least to worry about. The woman who is never invited anywhere, doesn't worry about it; it is the woman who has more invitations than she ought to have, but has missed the one she wanted. The man with an incurable disease, does not worry about it; the man who weighs himself every month, and looks in the glass every day to see whether he is better or worse, is the man with whom nothing is the matter. The man who never had any money and never expects to have any, doesn't worry about it; it is the man who has plenty, but is afraid that he won't have any more, or, sometime, not so much. I never knew the person who worried about any particular thing, who didn't find something else to worry about when that was gone. Worry is a mental habit. It can be prevented, and helped, and in most cases cured. How?

In the first place, by a frank recognition of the fact, that the most important thing in the life of every one of us, is the state of mind in which we live.

Most of us forget this, at least a part of the time. We think that the most important thing is how much we can learn, or whether we succeed in business, or whether we can "get ahead," and a lot of other such things. But it isn't. The most important thing,—I would almost say the only important thing,—is how we feel about it.

What is the use of being rich, if you feel poor? Or well, if you feel sick? Or good, if you feel bad? Life is worth what you get out of it. And that depends not on where you go, or what you have, or what you know, but how you feel about it. If a man has succeeded in everything he ever tried, has stood first in his class, and at the head of his profession, has distanced his competitors and beaten his enemies and been praised and appreciated the world around, but has stewed and fretted and worried his way through it all, he has wasted his time. We must understand this, see it clearly, and call ourselves back to it as often as we forget it.

In the second place, there is a certain thing called philosophy; not the philosophy of the books or the schools, but the homely and practical kind, that teaches you how to take things. It is to the human spirit what the bark is to the tree, and the shell to the nut.

What I mean is well illustrated in the saying attributed, I believe, to Confucius; "The legs of the stork are long; the legs of the duck are short; thou canst not make the legs of the duck long; thou canst not make the legs of the stork short; why worry"? Many people less noted than Confucius have attained to this philosophy. A woman told me once about the scarlet fever breaking out among her children. Her maid and her nurse fled in terror. She went into the kitchen and telling the cook what had happened, said to her, on the verge of tears, "You won't leave me, will you?" The old Negress put her hands on her hips, and smiled and said, "No; I believe that what yer gwine to git yer gwine to git." When Gloster found Kent sitting in the stocks, and proposed to entreat Cornwall for him, Kent said,

"Pray, do not, sir. I have watched and traveled hard;
Some time I shall sleep out, the rest I'll whistle.
A good man's fortune may grow out at heels:
Give you good morrow."

Jesus had a touch of this philosophy about him; "Which of you" he asked, "could make himself an inch taller?" "Every day brings trouble enough of its own."

This is not a simple or superficial thing, to be had by committing a few stock phrases to memory and repeating them at the right time. It is a certain large and wholesome and objective way of looking at things. Truth and progress can take care of themselves. There is a hand that guides. The human race can be trusted. Forces larger and stronger than ourselves, are at work around us and in us. It is not for us to kick against the pricks. What little we can do, we should do,—and leave the rest. And generally, if we can not do it easy, we can not do it at all.

Every man has this philosophical mood once in a while. When it comes to you, recognize it as an emergence in your little consciousness, of a spirit larger than your own. Keep it as long, and call it back as often, as you can.

In the third place, what we have is always so much greater and better than any of the things we have missed that we should be ashamed to worry about these. This was what Jesus meant when he said, "Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?" When we have the greater, why should we worry about the less?

You say to yourself, that if you could live in Florence, you would not worry that

you couldn't have the villa half-way up the hill to Fiesole. If you had a half-dozen children, all well and strong, and acredit to you, you would be ashamed to worry because you had to walk instead of ride. If we had the big things, the really and truly big things, we shouldn't worry about the little ones.

But every one of us has the great thing. For the great thing is, as Jesus said, to be alive. We often say that life in general is a miracle. Every man's own life ought to be a miracle to him, an overwhelming revelation of the love and power of God. But we have been alive so long and have got so used to it, that it escapes us that this is the great thing; and with this right in our hands, we do not see it,—we only see all these little things that we haven't; and we worry about them.

In the fourth place, we can not improve upon Jesus' own rule for the avoidance of worry; and that was, to put ourselves heart and soul into the search for something great. This is the only way a man gets his mind off himself.

The other things are not always added. We can not pretend that they are. But the advantage of seeking the great things,— knowledge, wisdom, service, the kingdom of

God,—is, that the other things may be added or not; they will not matter.

For what are the things we worry about? Just things,—that is all. Things to eat and things to wear, things to hang on the wall, things to sit on and to ride in, things to put in the bank, better things and worse things, but still only things. Get your mind off of things. "Serve the ideal." "Seek the kingdom of God." "Fill your soul with a great purpose;" work for the triumph of good in the world and for your own perfection. When the world is full of ideals, of principles, of causes fit to draw out the noblest in every one of us, why should we worry about things?

After all, the one greatest cure for worry is, always has been and always will be, religious faith. If our faith in God does not do this much for us it is not worth much to us. I do not mean that we can hold all through life, our childish faith that if we read our Bibles and say our prayers, God will not let anything happen to us that we do not like. We may be poor, we may be sick, we may be unrecognized, we shall surely grow old and die, but why should we be afraid of these, and a hundred other things, that are a natural and inevitable part of human life? Maybe they will be

good for us,—better, perhaps, than some of the things we like. The world is good. The universe is the home of a divine reason and an infinite love, and sooner or later, in one way or another, all things that we behold must be full of blessing.

We are in the hand of God. A reason larger than our own, a love that masters ours, holds us back, or pushes us on, and has us in its infinite care and keeping, — why should we be fussy about it? This is the way the world looked to Jesus. It looked so to him, not because it treated him better than it treats most men. But it looked so to him, because he saw it reflected in the depths of a quiet and trustful spirit. So every man will see it — disorderly, capricious and full of terrors, or kindly, wise and loving, as his own mind is. But so it looked to Jesus, — a world fathered by the infinite wisdom and guided in infinite love. If we know that we live in this kind of world, we know that whatever comes to us will be good.

And if we know this, why worry?

# THE LEADERSHIP OF JESUS.

"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away." — Matthew xxiv, 35.

(17)

## THE LEADERSHIP OF JESUS.

I want to take four or five problems of the present day, and show the bearing of the teachings of Jesus upon them. What I want to show is that these teachings are not antiquated; they are absolutely modern, —altogether too modern for most of the world;—we have got into most of our troubles because we have not followed them; a frank adoption of them is our straightest way out.

1. The most fundamental of all the teachings of Jesus was that people should love their enemies, abstain from hatred or retaliation, and overcome evil with good.

The simplest and most far-reaching deduction from this position, is that war should be abandoned, and disputes between nations settled by orderly and peaceable means. The world can not be regarded as distinctly Christian while it frankly ignores or defies this fundamental position of Jesus.

Quite aside from anything that is happening just now, when you read the history of Europe,—which is the history of the Christian nations of the world,—it seems to

be primarily a history of wars. You wonder who stayed at home to do the work, who paid the bills, who was left after the fighting was over, and how people could find so many things to fight about. A large part of the total business of men, so far, and of Christian men much more than of Hindu or Confucianist or Buddhist men, has been to kill one another. All this is a part of our pre-Christian inheritance, and of the heathen ideas that have been mingled with our Christian teachings.

Many of the great fighters of the world have been good Christians, in their own and the popular understanding of that term. Bismarck was a pious man and a staunch Lutheran; he read his Bible, he said his prayers religiously. He called God to help him in everything he did. He trusted in Him for help. He looked forward to eternal life, and did his duty in the fear of God.

But there is one thing that Bismarck neither did nor pretended to do. I don't know whether it ever occurred to him to do it. He did not go to the teachings of Jesus, nor to the spirit of those teachings, to find out what his duty was. He never framed a single foreign policy, never held a diplomatic conversation, never wrote a treaty, with the slightest reference to anything

Jesus ever said. Neither did Cavour, nor Victor Emmanuel, nor Napoleon III.

I do not say that, under the circumstances, they might or could have done so. I only call attention to the fact that they did not. I am only saying that at this point even good Christians have made no attempt to follow the leadership of Jesus. The present upheaval of half of the world has come because the statesmen and leaders of the nations have followed principles the direct opposite of those of Jesus.

Not that the generals and statesmen of Christendom have done anything exceptional in this. They have taken their cue from the rest of us. The heroes of the popular imagination have always been, and still are, the men who have killed the most people. It will probably be a good many generations yet before any other figure will look so grand to the eye of youth as Napoleon Bonaparte. The man who makes grain to grow in the wilderness and houses to rise in the desert, by whose intelligence and labor children play quietly in the sunshine and women move unmolested about their duties, and men enjoy the right to labor and to live,—nobody stops to look at him; but the man who rides a horse, at the head of a column of men, all dressed in uni-

form with brass buttons has the eyes of all the town. Many generations of young ladies will have to grow up and die, before we shall have one in whose eyes an apprentice will look as handsome as a cadet, or a college professor as fine as a lieutenant. The individual, in every nation, must learn to desire peace, before the rulers of any nation will keep it.

And for this what is needed is a frank acceptance of the leadership of Jesus. If we are Mohammedans, fighting is for us, for Mohammed believed in the sword. But if we are Christians, let us all be Christians, —not in the sense of placing our hope of eternal salvation on something Jesus did for us nineteen hundred years ago, but in the sense of absorbing his spirit and following his teaching.

Here one sees one of the disadvantages of that view of the Bible which has placed it all on a level, because all equally divine. Christian warriors have never appealed to the words of Jesus;—never could find there anything to appeal to. They have always gone back to the Old Testament, to the bloodier portions of the Psalms, and to the wars of the Israelites. Jehovah, who was for a thousand years the tribal deity of the Israelites, and who really passed away with

the birth of monotheism and the universal fatherhood of God as taught by Jesus, has been and still is the God of the Christian fighters.

I saw recently the announcement of several new books on "The Old Testament and War." Why not the New Testament and War? Why not War and the teachings of Jesus? Because they would not answer the purpose. The "Higher Criticism" has often been denounced as the work of men hostile to Christianity. If we had a little more of it, and if its results were allowed to trickle down more freely into the consciousness of Christendom, the Christian world would begin some day to draw a distinction between Christianity and the ages of semi-barbarism that preceded it; and between Jehovah the god of battles and the Universal Father of Jesus.

I am not surprised at the wars that have occurred in Christendom. Not even surprised that it is Christendom that is now at war. I am not assuming to blame the whole of Christendom. I am only saying that as plain matter of fact, Christendom is not very Christian so long as it has not yet taken to heart the fundamental position of Jesus. And I am saying still more that what the whole of Christendom needs, and

every man and woman in Christendom, in the present crisis, and for the avoidance of the like in time to come, is simply the frank acceptance of the leadership of Jesus.

2. We need the leadership of Jesus in our feeling about money and the things that money will buy.

How Jesus felt about all this is perfectly plain. Poverty to him was no blessing. It was to be alleviated by every kindly and honorable effort. But at the same time it was not a thing to be feared, nor to spend your life in trying to wriggle away from. Money was nothing to dream about, to lie awake nights for, to arrange your whole life with reference to;—it was incidental.

So was every kind of worldly success. It might come or not. Either way, it would not matter much. He wasn't afraid of being poor. He couldn't see anything in it that could hurt anyone. He couldn't see that things,—things to eat or things to wear or things to ride in, or things of any kind, made so much difference. He taught that people were to live for many objects,—for love, for honor, for righteousness, for the Kingdom of God, but not for money.

I do not think the Christian world, nor even the Christian church, has followed the leadership of Jesus in this matter. I have

never observed that Christian people are much less worried about money matters, much less anxious to be rich, much less afraid of being poor, than other folks. About as far as most of us have got in this matter is that we have schooled ourselves to bear with comparative composure the poverty of other people.

The statement of the apostle is not quite correct, that "the love of money is the root of all evil." Many evils run down into a quite different soil, into ignorance and prejudice, or into appetite and passion. Licentiousness and intemperance cost a lot of money; if some men loved their money better than they love these things they would be better men. And yet it does not take a Sherlock Holmes to see how many of our evils do go back to this root.

People do not like to steal, for instance. And when some revelation comes out, as some revelation is always coming out in every respectable community, which puts into the class of common criminals a man or a group of men of whom we had all hitherto thought well, that is not usually because these men set out to be worse than the rest of us; it is rather that the general craze for getting hold of money struck them in a weak spot. Licentiousness

might still flourish if the love of money were gone. And yet it would not flourish as it does now,—would not be promoted and encouraged and catered to, except for the money there is in it. If the love of money were gone, people would still get drunk. But if there were nothing but the instinctive craving for alcoholic stimulants, the liquor problem would be no problem. What makes the liquor problem a problem is the growth of the "liquor interest" as we call it. It is the systematic attempt to cultivate a public taste for drinking, to stimulate and protect the trade, to entrench it behind legislation, and to control the machinery of government in its behalf.

Macaulay once said that the law of gravity would never have been accepted if it had conflicted with any vested interests. If we all had money in the liquor business, we should all be boosting it. Enough men will go to the junk heap anyway; why should it be to the financial interest of so many men to send them there?

I am not talking about the liquor business. I am talking about the leadership of Jesus, and of how far we are from accepting that leadership in matters of money and worldly success. I fear, I very much fear,

that we have all of us helped to create the impression that we will not interfere with any business however bad, if it only has enough money in it. We are all of us weak on this point,—all of us too much afraid of being poor, all of us too crazy about money. If this did not involve us in any of these things I have just spoken of, it would still be bad enough;—it would still worry and fret us, still keep us working over-time, still distort our estimates of human life, still spoil our health and our contentment.

We must come around to the point of view of Jesus, accept his leadership without reservation; it is better to live in a little house and wear an old coat, better never to set foot in an automobile or have a penny in the bank, better to have our boys and girls go barefooted and our women folks wear shawls over their heads like the Italian peasants, better to sit out unprotected in the rainy day when it comes, better I mean for our own intellectual comfort and our own moral worth and our own personal peace and contentment every day, than to live the slaves and worshipers of money and worldly success. We do not believe it yet,—I know it,—we have not followed Jesus that far yet; but it is true just the same.

3. And there is another thing in which we need, oh how sorely we do need, the leadership of Jesus, just now. It is in our attitude toward human nature, toward folks as folks.

Last week I heard my old classmate who has lived in India for thirty years, tell how he has often heard a man of one caste in that country say to a man of another caste who pressed too close to him on the street, "Look out there, you are coming too near me." Afraid that if one of his fellow-creatures stepped between him and God's sunshine, he would be contaminated! The poor man who brought on the European war said in court recently, that it was no crime to attempt to put an end to the systematic oppression of one people by another people. Whatever other things are behind that war, the one thing fundamentally back of it is race hatred. Among Christian races it is not yet the belief,—it is certainly not the universal belief here in America,—that one race has as good a right to live as any other race.

Just at this point will be a battleground of social thought for years to come. There are backward races and forward ones; ignorant races and educated ones. But is there, or is there not, any inherent dignity in

human nature as such. We believe in the dignity of white people. Shall we or shall we not believe also and equally in the dignity of yellow and black people?

I am often told that race prejudice is a fact, and must be accepted as such. What kind of a fact? Is it an ultimate fact, against which it is foolish to make any efforts? Is it a sacred fact, which should be buttressed by law, condensed into custom, and cherished and sustained in every possible way? Is it a divine fact, like the multiplication table, or a miserable fact, like ignorance or dirt. Will you invite it in, or lock the door upon it? That all depends on what you think of the inherent dignity of man.

I get great comfort at this point from the modern doctrine of evolution. If that doctrine is true, there is no natural superiority of any race to any other race. All superiority has been acquired. The races were not made, in the beginning, with their present inequalities and made to keep them. There is an infinite expanding power in human nature. But some races have got so far, and some as yet not so far—that is all.

What we need here is the leadership of Jesus. For there is no doubt as to what Jesus thought about this. If everything

else he taught were to be forgotten, and there were to remain one lesson large and beautiful enough to justify his life and death, that one lesson would be, the infinite worth of the human soul,—not the clean soul, nor the cultivated soul, nor the soul in a white skin, but the human soul as such. We have walked through seas of blood before now,—and Europe is weltering in one such at this moment,—because we have not believed this. We will never be safely and cleanly out of these, till we come to the position of Jesus.

What I am trying to show you all through this, is that Jesus is not an antiquity nor an anachronism. He is absolutely modern,—too modern for the Christian world thus far. We have not got beyond him. We have not yet gone with him nor come to him. His leadership is not a matter of sentimentality, but lies in the field of thought and ideals and principles. We have our troubles because we forsake that leadership. We shall come out of them as we learn to follow it.

But there is one other realm in which Jesus is most modern of all. That is the realm of religion.

He lived among a people who adored the priest; he made a priest of every man. He

found men worshiping old shrines and sacred buildings and holy places; he made all nature an altar and man himself the one great temple of God. The old sacrificial system of his fathers did not interest him; he said he would rather see the temple in Jerusalem a house of prayer for all nations. His folk were the slaves of institutions; he said they were made for man and man was the lord of them.

No man ever lived with less of the ecclesiastic about him. A censer would have dropped out of his hands, a bishop's robe from off his shoulders. He never even said as the old prophets used to, "This is the word of Jehovah." He spoke his own conviction, confident that in the heart of every good man was something that would recognize and respond to it. He made righteousness an inner disposition, not an outward rule. He criticised the scriptures, and the traditions of the forefathers. Gentle and reverent as a child, no freer, bolder explorer ever sailed the seas of thought.

To these religious positions of Jesus, modern thought is just beginning to bring us. Science says, "Give up your discussions about natural and supernatural; all things are divine." It is the position of Jesus, who found God equally in the flower by the road-

side and in his own soul. History says, "Religious institutions, customs, beliefs, grow old and die, but religion remains." It is the position of Jesus, who said, "Neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem, but in spirit and in truth." Modern humanitarianism says, "God does not care for richness of form nor splendor of buildings, —better a bare meeting-house and a happy people than a great cathedral and a population of serfs around it." It is the position of Jesus who hastened from the temple and found God in the village street and by the lake. Our long experience with systems and with formulas has taught us at last that all the arguments of the wisest men are not worth so much as one small deed of uncalculating mercy. It is the position of Jesus, who could not bear that Bartimæus should be blind or Mary Magdalene unhappy. The personal and social ideals of Jesus, just beginning to dawn upon our modern world, but most of all his religious postions, fresh today as the sunrise, contemporaneous as the striking hour, and as yet accepted only by the more progressive and venturesome spirits of the age, proclaim aloud to our modern world the supreme leadership of Jesus.

We may give heed to that leadership or not. We may live on in a world where the prophets cry peace but there is no peace. We may lose our lives in a vain pursuit of mere things. We may perpetuate the old discriminations, build higher the ancient walls of separation, make our religon blind with traditionalism and mere routine. But I hear a voice from out the centuries saying again, "Every one that heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them not." Or we may take heed to this leadership, disown the barbaric in us, set the arts of peace above the arts of war; abate our worship of money and success, lay aside our prejudices and think of men as God thinks of them, open our minds to the manifold threads of modern thought that lead us to the profound and simple religion of Jesus. Then shall we hear, out of all our perplexities and problems that other word, "Everyone that heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them." This is that leadership which if we will follow, will bring us all to peace, and usefulness, and eternal life.

# PERSONAL RELIGION.

"Acquaint thyself with God and be at peace." — Job xxii, 21.

## PERSONAL RELIGION.

In the last few years religion has undergone a wonderful expansion, especially in two directions.

The first is on its social side. It used to be an exclusive affair, of the individual and God. It was a man's own soul, with or against the Infinite. If a man "got right with God," that was all of it.

We have worked far away from this. Our business is not our own salvation. It is the salvation of the world. We are part and parcel of the race. Everybody's poverty is our shame, everybody's sin our fault, everybody's progress our aim, everybody's good our hope. It is the day of social legislation, social ethics, social ideals. All this is now part of our religion.

We have also come to see religion as a great historical force. Forty years ago, nothing was known by ordinary people, and little by religious teachers, about any religion except Christianity. Even when we studied the history of Christian nations, we left the religion on one side, or studied it by itself as if it were a thing apart. But

now, instead of a little flame burning dimly in the heart of the individual, we see religion as a great force operating continuously and everywhere in human life. We see it building for itself, first shrines, then temples, then a priesthood, then a ritual, then creeds; embodying itself in great institutions like the Catholic church; creating vast literatures, like the Vedas, the Book of the Dead, the Avestas, the Koran, the Jewish and the Christian Bible; sending men off to fight great wars, like the Crusades; marshalling them on pilgrimages, as to Jerusalem and to Mecca; dividing them into hostiles camps, like Charles V and Spain against William the Silent and the Dutch Republic, or welding them into a nation like Israel and Italy; dictating customs, permeating civilizations. Such things it has done in all times, and in every corner of the globe. As the vast outlines of Confucianism, Buddhism, Mohammedanism, begin to loom up before us, with the history of the countries where they have played their part, religion appears to us as a vast historical force.

In the midst of all this expansion of religion, in which I rejoice, I wish to make the modest suggestion that it is still neces-

sary for every man to have a personal religion of his own.

Everything in the world starts from persons, and comes back to them.

We shouldn't care about governments, laws, wars, anything, if they did not help individual men to be good or bad, and make individual women and children miserable or happy.

Everything comes back to persons. And it comes back sooner or later to you and me. What is it to us that religion has been a great historical force, or is now a great social ideal, if you and I have no religion of our own? You are not merely a cog in the wheel, not a fragment of humanity. You are yourself. You are a person. And to be a person of any consequence, you need a personal religion.

What do I mean by a personal religion? I mean a religion of your own. Not your father's, not your mother's, not the religion of your church, nor of your set, nor even of your wife, but your own. Some people don't have anything of their own, except their clothes and their life-insurance. Their ambitions are those of their stratum in society, their tastes are the tastes of their set, their ideas are the ideas of their church or party. There is nothing personal about

them. Everything they have they have either borrowed or bought. They are second-hand all thru. I wouldn't bother to live, if I had to be an echo or a piece of patch-work. I'd be a person. And to be a person you have to have a religion of your own.

How do you make it your own? By thinking it out for yourself. This is the only way to make anything your own. What the teacher or the text-book says is not yours, even if you learn it by heart. Yours is only what has gone thru your own mind, and come out with the stamp of your own personality on it. What the Outlook or the Independent says about the war is not yours. It is just so of religion. You make it your own by thinking it out for yourself.

I am astonished at how many people do not do this. I know how many people, who are fairly intelligent, have no vital interest in religion. They know it is good to be good. For various reasons they go to church (or stay away). If the preacher can keep them awake and listening, they have no objection. They believe in religion. They will even give their money to keep it going. But they have no vital interest in it.

And I know why this is. It is because they don't know anything about it. This is the reason any of us do not care about any

given thing. Why don't I care about law, or medicine, or ancient history, or a lot of other things? Because I don't know anything about them.

You always care when you know. I can say exactly when the Christian religion began to be a matter of absorbing interest to me. It was when I began to learn something about it, and the great ideas that have moved the world for eighteen hundred years began to filter thru my own head and come out as my own personal possession. When I began to know where Christianity came from, what it borrowed from one place and what from another, who Jesus was, and how much of what he said meant something, and just what it meant, for me, then I got an interest in religion that has grown to this day. What you want is a religion of your own, a religion personal to you. You yet this by thinking it out for yourself.

But why do you need any religion of your own? Why isn't it just as well to take a slice out of the general religion?

You need one of your own in the first place, because you are not quite like any one else. Conscientious people are sometimes concerned because their religion does not tally exactly with that of some of their

family and friends. Why, that is a thing to thank God for. That shows that you are getting your eyes open. When you can see that you differ, you are beginning to emerge from the mass. You can wear off my hat, or carry away your neighbor's umbrella, or sit in somebody's else's pew in church, without discovering it. But nobody's religion will really fit you but your own.

You need a personal religion, in the second place, to give you a clue to the meaning of human life. The history of the world is a mixed and confusing affair. As you read it, and as you see it going on now in all its terrible mixture of hatred and folly, you need assurance that it all means something, and something fine and beautiful in the end. If you see in it only the play of one human passion against another, the lust for gain, the hope of plunder, the fear of want, the struggle for personal or national supremacy,—only an endless melee as of so many tigers in the jungle, with no clue running thru it, no increasing purpose making itself ever more clear and beautiful even thru the misery and the sorrow, it is unendurable. All you can do is to turn your eyes away, and forget it in your own business or your own pleasure. But if you can see in all the tortuous path the human

race has followed from the beginning, an end and meaning that justify it, you can possess your soul in peace. I don't know where you will get any such point of view except from your religion.

You need a personal religion, equally, to help you find the clue to your own life.

If yours is anything like mine, it is more or less of a tangle. You have partly succeeded and partly failed. You thought at twenty that you would be a great scholar, a great force in the world, a great leader of men. Here you are, at fifty, just ordinary. You have learned some things, but not many; done a few things, but nothing of consequence; cut no figure that makes any great difference to anyone. You are just ordinary,—or less. Meanwhile you have done many things that make you ashamed to look in the glass.

Time also has dealt ruthlessly with you. Your children have died, or grown up worthless which is worse. You have worked hard for your cherished schemes, and now in a sober moment you wonder whether they were worth it. Back and forth between evil and good, now better now worse, a terrible mixture of decision and indecision, failure and success,—that is your life.

Now, how are you going to feel about it all? Have you any standard? Is there any tribunal to which you can appeal? Is there anyone who understands you, better than you understand yourself, who has been working in you and thru you, and to whom your life is something more than this shuttle-cock and battle-dore affair that you and your neighbors see?

You can appeal to your own conscience; but you will be mighty lonesome if that is all you can do and mighty lucky or stupid if you can always get a favorable verdict from it. Or you may be so much flesh and so little spirit that you never ask any of these questions. I ask them,—about myself. They come to me when the day is over, when I am alone and quiet, when I get a letter from an old friend, when I think of the hopes that were centered in me by people who had more sense and character than I have. And I get my answer to them, out of my religion.

You need a personal religion also, as a motive. There is something grand about the simplest human life, if it has been lived for great ends. "I dedicate this book," wrote Dr. Gordon a few years ago, "to the inspiring memory of my Father, George Gordon, of Insch, Scotland,—born and bred to the

vocation of farmer; one of the bravest of men, to whom the order of summer and winter, seed-time and harvest was a token of the Infinite Good-will, and who toiled in the fields of time in the sense of the Eternal."

I have known many men to whom a similar dedication might have been made,—humble men going quietly about their own affairs and making no figure in the world's life, but impelled by a divine compulsion that made them great. But I see so many people who are not impelled by anything in particular. Nothing back of them. No steady, central force, pushing them unswervingly, thru good winds and thru bad, to any harbor. There may be other reasons why so many young men are listless, unambitious, and why so many young women concentrate their energies on learning to smoke cigarets. But one of the most obvious reasons is the lack of personal religion. You will always find a vacancy in them where that ought to be. But founders of states, like William the Silent, Cavour and Bismarck; saviours of nations, like Cromwell and Lincoln and Calvin; explorers of continents, like Livingstone and Stanley; men before whom kings have trembled, like Savonarola and John Knox; men who

have conceived and executed the great enterprises that have blessed mankind, have been men of personal religion. Many men have done great things who were not in good standing with the churches, who could not assent to the creeds or get spiritual profit out of the ceremonies, or who did not like sermons or prayers; but I believe you could almost count on your fingers the men who have accomplished any lasting benefit to the world, who did not have, deep down in their hearts, a religion of their own. If you don't have this, you don't have much.

May a man, in spite of the fact that he is a preacher, lay aside for the moment all professionalism, and tell the truth, confidentially, about himself? If he may, I want to do it now.

My own personal religion might not do for you at all. It is so simple it may hardly seem to you worth describing. But it is mine, —not my father's, nor my mother's, nor anybody's but mine. I have worked for it, thought myself out to it, dug it out of my own experience, shaped it to fit my own needs,—and it is worth the world to me.

I seem to have but little dependence upon outward helps. I certainly do not need the doctrines that many people seem to find helpful,—doctrines of inspiration, of incar-

nation, of atonement, of heaven and hell; I have no plan of salvation; I do not worry about my sins; I am not much, if any, interested in what is going to happen to me when I am dead; I think God can take care of me as he did before I came here; whatever is in store for me in some other world, I think I shall be satisfied with it, for I have always been content with what I found here. If it is better than this, I shall appreciate that; if it is as good as this it will be good enough, and better than I deserve. About all this I do not care particularly.

My religion seems to have reduced itself to a great conviction of God. God is here and now, in me, in you, in nature, in humanity. I can not get away from Him. I do not want to. As I plod along, doing my work, making my blunders, committing my sins and repenting of them, trying my best to learn more and to do better, the great fact of life for me is that God is with me. I do not often reach out my hand to Him, because he is too close for that. I do not say much to Him, for I have a private and personal understanding with Him that seems to make it superfluous. I do not ask Him for many things, because I think He knows better than I do what is good for me, and is doing all He can for me all the time. I

don't feel obliged to forego any natural human pleasure or suppress any natural instinct on His account, for I know he wouldn't like this any better than I would. He doesn't' seem to ask me to do anything that it is not a pleasure for me to try. Even when I fail, or even when I have done wrong, I am not afraid of Him, nor embarrassed by Him. I get along with Him because I know Him and like Him. I do not flatter myself that He approves of everything I do; but He knows me, He understands me, He makes allowance for me.

And so, as Walt Whitman said, "No array of terms can say how much I am at peace about God;"—and I am content. I may fail in many things I undertake, in my work in this pulpit, or in some other one. I may be foolish and silly again, as I have often been in the past. I shall be sorry if I am. I do not expect to enjoy my failures nor my troubles when they come. But I can not conceive that anything can happen to me that will be able to rob me of the satisfaction I take,—worth all the world to me,—in the acquaintance and companionship of God.

This is what I mean by personal religion. Have you anything like it?

# TROUBLES.

"'Man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward."—Job v, 7.

## TROUBLES.

There are some things that are apt to run scarce now and then. Some people are without money, some without friends, some without knowledge, some without talent, and so on; but when the world was made there seems to have been enough of one thing to go around; and that is trouble. Everybody has some of that. It is a sort of proverb,—I have seen it printed and hung above men's desks or over their counters,—"We have troubles of our own." And if anyone happens at any time to be out of troubles of his own, there is always someone who has more than he needs and is willing to share with him. Often these borrowed troubles are better than one's own.

Concerning these exceedingly common things that we call troubles, I wish to ask these simple questions: 1. Where do they come from? 2. What do they do to us? 3. What shall we do with them? 4. Have they any religious significance? I am not speaking primarily of those great troubles that come to us once or twice in a life-time,

—of death, of earthquakes, of sweeping floods or pestilences;—not primarily of these, but just of those little and ordinary troubles that make so large a part of our daily life.

1. How do we come to have so many of these?

Parenthetically, have you ever duly considered the advantage of having more than one trouble at a time? I very much prefer it, myself.

If you have only one trouble, there is great danger of its getting onto your nerves. You have too much time to dwell upon it. It becomes a sort of fixed idea with you, and grows out of all proportion. But when you have two or three at a time you can never give your undivided attention to any one of them, and so no one of them can completely absorb or dominate your mind. You have time to breathe while you are turning from one to another of them. You can apply the military rule, "Divide and conquer." Nature has kindly arranged for those of us who prefer more than one trouble at a time; as the proverb says, "Troubles never come singly." But where do so many of them come from?

The commonest troubles, among men, are those that we call "business" troubles.

Not merely financial troubles, but all those that go with the complicated process of earning a living. The market will go to pieces. The men will strike, the firm will fail. If the prices are good the crop is small. If the crop is good the prices are small. People will take advantage of you. A man will sit in your office, and look you straight in the eye and tell you what is not so. The season will be bad. Sometimes the legislature gets hold of you and tells you what you shall do and how you shall do it, without first having asked you whether you can or not. Sometimes you stand and see the tide running away from you and leaving you high and dry; you can not stop it, you can not turn it, you can not catch it; all you can do is to stand and watch it go. And all the time competition is getting a little stronger, and you are getting a little older and a little less able to meet it.

It is just the same in the professions. The specialist can charge a big fee, but he can not collect it. The general practitioner can collect but he can not charge. In the law you can make a living, but you are liable to lose some other things in doing it. In teaching you can improve your mind, but it is hard to support your

family. In the ministry you can be good, but you have to watch out or you will not amount to anything. Every calling has its drawbacks. "Business," in a general way, furnishes us men with most of our troubles.

And what men get out of their business, women get out of their households. The cost of living is high. Children want more than they ever did before. They go into society earlier, they stay later. There are more things for them to spend their money on. There is more work to do at home, and it is harder to get anyone to help do it. And for all these troubles that go with business and housekeeping, nobody is, or ever was, to blame. You can get away from some of them by moving into another house or going into another business; but you will just get into others. As we say, "if it isn't one thing it is another." They do not come from anywhere in particular. They just belong with business and family life; and they always did.

There are troubles of another sort that come with the growth of society. When castles began to rise all over England, and in every castle was a big man, and around it were the huts of a thousand little men, and the big man oppressed the little men and the little men hated and feared the big

one, and almost nobody was at peace with anybody, and every man had troubles enough, all that was only because England was growing toward monarchy. When Cromwell's horses were stabled in Westminster Abbey, and the great organ pipes were pawned for pots of ale, and palaces went up in smoke and heads came off of shoulders, and every city and shire in England were full of trouble again, that was only because England was growing toward democracy. When prices in North and South went soaring, and bubbles burst, and nobody knew who would be poor tomorrow, but men forgot these troubles because in almost every home there was a worse one, that again was because America was growing toward freedom.

So when a man finds himself today, involved on one side or the other of great industrial conflicts, his business disturbed, his freedom curtailed, his mind worried, all that again is not due to anybody in particular; it is no use to complain about it; it is just a part of this modern industrial ferment,—this growth toward something, nobody knows just what.

And there are the troubles we make for ourselves. Sometimes I think we are silly ever to mention the troubles that other

people make for us when we make so many more troubles, and so much worse ones, for ourselves. I hope I am not more foolish, or ill-natured, or hasty, than most other men; but as I look back over my own life, I am perfectly aware that all the trouble that anybody and everybody else ever caused me,—friend, enemy, or whoever he was,—or that ever came to me through accident or blunder or circumstance of any sort, has been nothing and less than nothing, compared to what I have made for myself. And we can not get rid of ourselves.

Some people have a way of thinking that nobody else's troubles in all the world are quite so bad as theirs. They can make a little trouble go a long ways. This habit seems to me unnecessary. For there is enough to go 'round. Troubles are not an afterthought, nor an accident; they were in the specifications, apparently, when the world was made. We can not get along without them.

2. As to what our troubles do for us, what they do for some people is plain;—wrinkles, lines in the face all running downwards, a stoop in the shoulders, a whine in the voice, a generally whipped look, all come from troubles.

To some people. But not to all. When you see a man with these marks about him, you say, "His troubles begin to tell on him." But when you see a man of the opposite sort,—self-reliant, resolute, ready for anything,—a man who as Browning says, "Falls to rise, is baffled to fight better," and who takes life every day with the zest of a boy,—you do not say, "His troubles begin to show on him." And yet it may be precisely his troubles that have done all this for him.

Troubles of one kind in particular, have an ennobling effect on character. They are the troubles of other people. Workers in slums and settlement houses, charity sisters, salvation army lasses, teachers in destitute districts, missionaries in China and India and Africa,—all these people have a fiber to them that the rest of us lack. Strong threads of optimism have been woven in them with strands of rich charity and deep wisdom, into a pattern finer and more beautiful than most of us attain. It is because they have stood, for long years, next to the great needs of the world, and into their characters have been woven the woes and sorrows of millions of God's children.

3. And now my third question, What shall we do with our troubles, is partly an-

swered. It is commonly said that we should "bear" them. Perhaps that is all most people can be expected to do. But it does not strike me as a very high ideal. The horse, the dog, the ox, can do, and do do as much. If a man should study it all his life, I do not know that he could possibly learn to bear his troubles as calmly and uncomplainingly as the camel bears his.

And there is nothing attractive about stoicism, even if you are an artist at it. We are often advised to keep still about our troubles, "burn our own smoke" as we say. This is well enough. But sometimes, the more you cover your troubles up the more they smoulder and burn. And sometimes, all you need to clear them up is just to tell somebody about them. "To me," as Wordsworth says:

> "There came a thought of grief,
> A timely utterance gave that thought relief,
> And I again am strong."

"What, man! Ne'er pull your hat upon your brows," said Malcolm to Macduff:

> "Give sorrow words; the grief that does not speak,
> Whispers the o'er-fraught heart and bids it break."

To "bear" is not enough. What we want is to learn to turn even our troubles to account. Sometimes I see two pictures, in my mind. One is of a man carrying a great

sack on his back, into which he puts his troubles,—to "bear" them. And though he puts them in with a smile, and though he carries the sack himself without asking a lift from anyone, yet the sack gets fuller and heavier, and though the man carries it manfully, yet is his back the more bent and his step the heavier, the fuller grows the sack; and the more it interferes with his business and his pleasure, till it becomes the one great object of his life, just to carry it. The other is of a man who seems to stand continually upon a higher plane,—up every day where he can see a little farther across the sorrows and perplexities and attainments of life. What is it he stands on? There are many things in the pile that rises under his feet; sins, temptations, ambitions;—but I think the greater part of it is his troubles.

Finally, is there any religious significance to our troubles? Certainly.

Not, however, to my mind the one that has often been found there. People always used to be asking,—perhaps ask yet, "Does God send troubles?" For me that question does not exist.

Because, I have got away from any idea of God upon which such a question could rest. God is not off somewhere, where he

can, or needs to, send things to us, either good or bad. He lives in you, in me, in every one of his creatures. And living in you, he thinks in you, feels in you, suffers, triumphs, rejoices, in you. Your sorrows are his sorrows; and you never had an ache or a pain that He did not feel; all the troubles that surround you,—God not only sees and feels them as yours, but as his own; he plows through them, gets the better of them, rises upon them, just as you do. A god who lives off yonder somewhere and looks down, and sees, maybe, that you are a little too proud, and I am a little too lazy, and sends you something to take you down a peg, and me something to prod me up a bit, but who has no personal relation to these troubles,—who just sends them but does not at the same time have them and feel them as his own, is no god at all.

The divinest people we know in this world, are the people who can not see anybody else's trouble without feeling it as their own; and what makes God completely divine, is that nobody in all the world ever had any trouble, least or greatest, but God had at the same time, and to the same extent, that same trouble for his own. Sometimes I wonder whether our old picture of God as self-contained, perfect, complete,

sufficient to himself, is right at all. I wonder whether God also is not always growing, rising, coming more and more to himself, like the rest of us and in the rest of us, and if all the troubles of the universe, yours, mine, everybody's, are not the growing pains of the Infinite. God will forgive me if it is an irreverent thought. There was One at least, I know, who stands for us as uniquely representative of God. Christendom has often identified him with the Infinite, and paid Him the reverence and worship of God;—and of this One it is written, that he became perfect through suffering. He sent no troubles to anybody; he made everybody's troubles his own. If God is not like this, I do not know what he is like.

Here then is the sum of it all. Troubles are a part of life,—not an accident, not an afterthought, not anybody's fault, but a part of life as it is and as it has to be. And they are a part of God's life, as they are of yours and mine. We can take them so that they will spoil us, or we can take them so that they will make us. When you meet one of them this week, therefore, say, not "Here is another nuisance," but "Here is another opportunity." And God be with us all,—for He is with us all, in all our troubles.

# MARCHING TO MUSIC.

"And an highway shall be there; and the redeemed shall walk there; and the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads." — Isaiah xxxv, 8-10.

## MARCHING TO MUSIC.

Life is often likened to a march. And I guess it is a good deal like one. We are coming, we do not know whence. We are going, we do not always feel sure whither. But the one thing we all have to do and always have to do is to march.

Now it is easy to march to music. In one of the schools in my neighborhood the children sing this song:

"O I'd like to be a soldier when the band begins to play
And the regiment is out on dress parade,
And the stars and stripes are floating with a bit of bunting gay
And there's nothing left to make one feel afraid.

And it's Hip, Hip, and away we go.
Shake out the flag, and let the colors fly!
For I'd like to be a soldier when the band begins to play,
And the regiment goes marching by.

O it's great to be a soldier 'neath the banner of the free,
In America, my own, my native land!
And I'm sure that I shall try my best a patriot to be,
And some day I'll go a-marching with the band."

"With the band,"—that's it! Anybody can march, with the band. If you should be standing on High Street, and you should see a column of men crossing Broad,—too far away for you to hear anything; but if every man was alert, head up, shoulders back, all arms swinging like the pendulum of one clock, and not a man hanging his head or dragging his heels,—you would say, "I don't hear the band, but I know it is playing."

It is true of masses of men; and it's true of the individual;—easy to march to music! The man who is going down the street, and hears a band playing, and does not, unconsciously, fall into step, and walk a little stronger and steadier, is not all there. It is not merely that, in the familiar words, "Music hath charms to soothe the savage breast;" nor yet that, as Shakespeare said,

> "Orpheus with his lute made trees
> And the mountain tops that freeze,
> Bow themselves when he did sing;"

but music also has a martial quality to it, it was made to march to. And when I see a man going along listless, shuffling, dispirited, head down and heels dragging, I say to myself, "He doesn't hear the music." And when I see one marching good and

strong, head up and shoulders back, I say to myself, "He hears it."

What is this music to which we march through life?

1. First of all, I think it is the music of children's voices.

What people do, or how they march, who have no children about them;—who are neither fathers, nor mothers, nor day-school teachers nor Sunday-school teachers, who haven't any grandchildren, nor nephews, nor nieces, nor any children next door, nor next block, nor anywhere else around them, I do not know. I guess such people do not march, very strong, do they?

Anyhow, the music to which the average man marches the easiest and the strongest, is the music of children's voices. His own children's, primarily, of course. An English barrister who had never been much of a success,—perhaps had never had much chance to be,—but who suddenly leaped into fame by making a wonderful plea, was asked how he did it. "Why," said he, "when I rose to speak, I thought I felt my four children, tugging at my coat, and saying, 'Now, father, now.'" We all think we will not be foolish about our own children; and if we aren't, it is because we haven't any.

What the average man wants, more than he wants money or fame or knowledge or almost anything else, is to see his children grow up honest and respected. He wants them to have a better chance than he had; to know more than he knows; to be better than he is. And as long as he can hear the music of their voices, even though sometimes he has to hear it in memory alone, he has the courage to march.

Nor is it merely from our own children that we hear this music. School-teachers, as a class, I suppose, are the happiest, the best preserved, and the youngest-for-their-years, of all of us. It is because they march to the smartest music. And what keeps the whole world going, and going strong and true, is the simple fact that always there is a new generation of small girls in hair-ribbons, and small boys in knickerbockers, and they play the music for us, and we have to keep step.

2. Much like this music from the voices of the children, is that from the voices of those we love, whether they are old or young. No one of us can draw too big a circle around himself, nor fill it too full, clear to the circumference. But in our eagerness to reform the nation and convert

the world, we may miss, after all, the one thing we can not do without.

In Herbert Spencer's autobiography, he dwells fondly and at length, upon the splendid character of his father; public-spirited, interested in all social and political questions, he stood to his boy for a model. But after he has said all this, Mr. Spencer adds, "One thing must be recorded upon the other side;—he was not kind to my mother." Would it not have been better to have a father about whom nothing need be said, than to have had to write that one sentence about him?

I think often of the supremacy of the personal. Whatever you have ever done in any public or official capacity, I hope has been well done. But you never filled an office that some other man would not have been glad to fill;—perhaps he would have done it better than you did. The books you have written, the lectures you have delivered, the light you have shed on public problems, you must reflect that all this would have come from someone else if it had not come from you; or if it hadn't come from anybody, nobody would have missed it. But your more immediate and personal place in the world nobody ever could fill but you. Nobody can be a husband to your

wife, a father to your boy, a neighbor to your neighbors, but you; and all the good we do abroad, if we buy it at the expense of any contentment and happiness inside the walls of our own house, has cost us too much.

For there is one kind of music that was meant for each man of us all by himself. It is this music from the voices of those we love. The rest, we can all hear, alike. But this particular strain, with the blending in it of just these notes and no others, is for each one of us alone; for while everybody, I hope, is loved by many people, nobody ever loved the same dozen or hundred or thousand people that you love, just as you love them. Listen for this music. You must hear this, whatever else you miss.

3. Next to this music of children's voices and of those we love, is the music of honest toil.

Not your own alone; though somehow you never do hear this music unless you sing your own part. But there is so much said these days about the people who are out of work, and the people who would work if they could, and the people who could work if they would; the man who is dissatisfied with his job and sore on his pay gets in his word so often and so loud; the idle

rich are such a scandal and the idle poor are such a problem, that sometimes we almost fail to hear, for these discordant voices, the great chorus of honest labor that rises, the world around.

Most people do work; that is absolutely the most encouraging fact about this old world of ours. Most people do work, honestly, faithfully, the day through and the year round. From farm and office, from the decks of ships and the depths of mines, from stores and laboratories, from schoolrooms and from factories and from kitchens, the whole world round, through the day and through the night, ceaseless, reverberating, penetrating the hearts of cities and making the forest and the wilderness vocal, comes this music of honest toil.

If a man ever gets discouraged for the world; thinks some great calamity confronts it; or feels that, even as it is, it is about as much bad as good; and if, feeling this, his own step slackens and his own spirit grows dull, it is because he somehow does not hear this age-old and world-wide music of honest toil.

3. And there is a music, deeper, and coming from farther away, than this: it is the music of human history.

If I could not stop, in the midst of my own work and my own troubles, any time I wanted to, and catch some echo of that great song of human progress and achievement, I could not go on.

We get so used to seeing the world just as it is! We sort of assume that it was always something like this. We forget the jungle, because we never lived in it; and the fagot, because it never burned our ankles; and the chain, because we never wore it. But the one wonderful thing about our world, is the story of human progress. From the cave and the tree to the modern city; from the canoe and the donkey's back to the ocean steamer and the Pullman train; from the tom-tom and the war dance to the orchestra and the symphony; from the jabberings of the savage to the dramas of Sophocles and Shakespeare; all our arts, all our languages, all our ideas, all our governments, all our virtues even, made out of the blue sky, nothing given us, except the power to reach and to grow, nothing done for us, but all evolved out of our common human spirit, all dreamed in the human brain, all worked out by human hands, all achieved by human struggle,—that's the history of human life,—that's

what you and I and our ancestors have done!

Wordsworth said he had come to look upon nature not as in the hour of thoughtless youth, but hearing oftentimes the "still sad" music of humanity. Why the still, sad, music? The only kind of music that most folks do not need to hear is sad music; and still music most people will not hear. But could anything be louder than this great chorus of human achievement? What silence has it not startled with its cry, what solitude not awakened with its echo? Could anything be stronger or more jubilant? What are all the songs we sing, of love or of conquest, but faint reverberations in our own hearts of this strong glad music of humanity? There is a minor strain in it, now and then; and a discord here and there; but it is never feeble, it is never trivial, it never threatens to stop; and whoever hears it, can march.

4. And there is a music of a more intangible kind than this, even. It is the music of ideas, of truth, of knowledge. This is the music that Plato heard, in the harmony of the Divine Ideas, and Copernicus caught from the swinging of the spheres, and that smote the ear of Newton in the falling of the apple.

A classical example in modern times, of a man inspired by this music, is Charles Darwin. Bugs and beetles and barnacles, and things worse and more uninteresting than these,—were they not his daily portion, almost his meat and drink, for forty years? And what if, in the pursuit and capture and classification of these, he did, as he confessed, lose his taste for that music that is played upon instruments and rendered in concert halls? Had he not caught, dimly at first, and coming faint from afar, the refrain of that mighty music to whose rhythm the stars have swung into their places, and the oceans have filled their beds, and the generations of plants and animals and men have marched in endless procession across the stage of our world? And did he not listen day and night for that refrain, and follow it and work at it until he taught it to the world, and even school-children can now sing it?

But you say, this music is not for ordinary people. It's for scientists, and such. Well, here is the testimony of a Russian Jewess. Living in the slums of Boston, poor as only the daughter of an emigrant Russian Jew could ever be, she fell into a class at Hale House, studying natural history. And this is what she says: "I dipped

into zoology, botany, geology, and some other ologies, but I made no systematic study of any branch. For what enthralled my imagination was not the array of facts, but the glimpse I caught of the grand principles underlying the facts. By asking questions, by listening, by reading, by pondering and dreaming, I slowly gathered together the kaleidoscopic bits of the stupendous panorama which is painted in the literature of Darwinism. Vastly as my mind had stretched to embrace the idea of a great country when I exchanged Polotzk for America, it was no such enlargement as I now experienced when, in place of the measurable earth with its paltry tale of historic centuries, I was given the illimitable universe, with the numberless eons of infinite time. Now for the first time my heart was satisfied. The harmonious murmur of autumn woods broke up into a hundred separate melodies, as the pelting acorn, the scurrying squirrel, the infrequent chirp of the lingering cricket, and the soft speed of ripe pine cones through dense-grown branches, each struck its discriminate chord in the scented air." And so the feet of a Jewish maiden walked lightly in the footsteps of the great naturalist, and to the same music which he had heard.

I have seen many men who had been loitering and lagging along the road of life, into whose souls, by the inspiration of some teacher, or by fortunate discovery, or by the grace of God, some note of this far-off music sounded, and who marched, ever afterwards, strong and true, to its rhythm. Most of us are busy. We are pre-occupied. Our world is small. And there is music close about us to which we can keep step. But the oftener you lift your head and listen for the music that comes from far away, the stronger and the easier you will march.

5. And last of all, there is the music of religion.

For this is what religion is; not a dirge, a funeral march, something to make a man shuffle and whine his way through the world; but a great song of victory, breaking out of the human spirit as the sun breaks through the clouds; uncertain and wavering at first, and turning back upon itself in many a curious winding passage, but singing itself ever more clearly through the human heart in all the ages, and breaking out at last into a great jubilant chorus of victory, over self, and sin, and death, a song of love triumphant and of life eternal, —the strongest, clearest, and most triumphant music, I call it, to which the feet of

men have ever marched. I hear in it the voices of the just and the aspiring of all lands and climes, of martyrs and apostles and prophets, of little children and saintly women and resolute men, of Paul and Socrates, of Buddha and Isaiah, and of many a saint uncanonized and unheard of, and clear and strong above them all the voice of the Great Captain of Our Salvation.

And this is what I value religion for, and what I find in it; not a prescription for far-off ills, nor a bitter medicine to purge my soul of its meanness (much as I need that), but the great martial strain that keeps my spirit strong and my heart high, and my feet moving in rhythm with the great army of God.

For if a man had to go through the world hearing none of this music, might he not about as well not go at all? We live only by what we hear beyond the din of the immediate and the present.

"I hear the voices when the tide comes in,"
Said the old sailor, standing on the shore.
"On this bleak coast, above this wintry roar,
I hear the winds of summer, and the din
Of song birds in the palm trees; I have been
Among the isles of beauty, and once more
The summer seas on Eden headlands pour.
I hear the voices when the tide comes in."

"The tide of time flows in upon the world,
And breaks on Northern headlands white
with snow;
And some there be who hear discordant din;
But close I listen where its waves are hurled,
And I hear music from far islands blow—
I hear the voices when the tide comes in."

We all hear something; and the difference between us, is the difference in what we hear. What is the use of marching, unless you can keep step, and feel the lift of the rhythm and the swing, and get the inspiration of the great army moving as one? And how are you going to do that unless you hear the music?

But sometimes the music doesn't sound. I know it. I know it. Even a good man may now and then fail to hear it. Sometimes you listen, and you can't hear it;—only your own petty annoyances, and the voices of trouble and complaint, and the noises of the street and the market-place,—I know it. And when that happens, why then I don't know anything to do, but to march along until you hear it again.

But you must listen. For it will sound again. High above the roar of traffic and the sounds of contention and dispute,—high above all voices of personal reproach or self-accusation,—ringing clear and true, as in

the souls of good men and women of all the ages, you will hear it, beloved, the music that God makes for us; and you will march, to it, until you come home at last.

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